



LIBRARY OF HEAVEN'S PATH

C1254 - Scapegoating



Chapter 1254: Scapegoating

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"I'll take a look at it later on." Zhang Xuan nodded.

Even though Zhang Jiuxiao's fighting prowess was subpar and his talent was not really worth a mention, he still had a redeemed trait—reliability. Since the other party was telling him this news, most likely, there should be some level of credibility to it.

Besides, regardless of whether the Qianchong Empire had spirit mines or not, as the number one Conferred Empire with many Leaving Aperture realm experts under its command, it was bound to have a rich supply of concentrated high-tier spirit stones. As

long as he could find a channel to exchange or earn them, he should be able to raise his cultivation to Primordial Spirit realm pinnacle there.

With such thoughts in mind, the crowd arrived at a vast hall, and everyone swiftly took their seats. Pavilion Master Yue waved his hand with a hearty laugh and said, "Invite the outstanding talents who have cleared the primary selection in!"

A master teacher backed out of the room, and not too long later, a group of young men and women walked into the hall.

Dressed in master teacher robes, there were seven conspicuous stars weaved onto the emblems pinned on their chests.

Zhang Xuan quickly scanned through the arriving crowd.

Just as Zhao Xingmo had said, the cultivation of those who had cleared the primary selection was not too bad. The weakest ones were like him and Zhang Jiuxiao, Primordial Spirit realm intermediate stage, whereas the strongest ones were at Quasi Leaving Aperture realm.

To be able to advance their cultivation to this level before they even reached thirty, there were indeed plenty of geniuses in this world who possessed talent that did not pale too much in comparison to his.

"Zhao shi, the candidates have come here in a rush after clearing the primary selection, and I reckon they are weary after the long journey they have taken here. Thus, I specially prepared a banquet to welcome you, as well as to allow a day of rest for all the candidates. Will it be fine if we conduct the secondary selection tomorrow?" Pavilion Master Yue inquired with a smile.

Zhao Xingmo pondered for a moment before nodding. "It's fine."

Even though they were pushed for time, half a day's delay would not do much harm.

This would be a good opportunity for the young geniuses who had come for the secondary selection to let loose before facing the cruel challenges that lay ahead of them.

Upon receiving Zhao Xingmo's agreement, Pavilion Master Mo raised his hand and instructed, "Men, serve the wine and dishes!"

Following which, a group of apprentice master teachers walked out and served plates of delicacies before the crowd.

It seemed like Pavilion Master Yue had roughly estimated when Zhao Xingmo would be arriving and made preparations in advance.

As if to reflect their economic power as the number one Conferred Empire, the served dishes were the nourishing meat of saint beasts cooked along with various precious medicinal herbs. Judging from the cooking method, it seemed to have been prepared by a high ranked gourmet as well.

Not only was the meat fresh and succulent, the spirit infused within was also incredibly rich. Just a bite of it would leave one's zhenqi pulsating in excitement.

Such food was extremely beneficial to the cultivation of one's Primordial Spirit.

"This entire table should be worth at least several thousand high-tier spirit stones!" Zhang Jiuxiao remarked.

"So expensive?" Zhang Xuan was startled by the extravagance of the meal.

Back then, he had to go through so much trouble just to earn a thousand high-tier spirit stone. But now, just a single meal already cost way more than that. Income disparity sure was frightening!

"Just look at this Golden Tiger Beast Liver. On top of the Saint 1-dan Golden Tiger Beast, it's also complemented with four saint herbs, Riverbreath Grass, Pipa Stem, Desolate Flower, and Five-flavored Beef Leaf! These four have a maturity of roughly fifty years, and every single one of them is individually worth a hundred high-tier spirit stones. Taking all of these ingredients into account, and factoring in the exceptional skills of the gourmet that has prepared this dish, one could say that even a thousand high-tier spirit stone would be a low cost for this dish!" Zhang Jiuxiao analyzed.

Hearing Zhang Jiuxiao's analysis, Zhang Xuan took a look at the dish himself and realized that his analysis was spot-on. Thus, he could not help but ask, "You... have studied food before?"

Gourmet was a Lower Nine Paths occupation, and it was not even qualified to be considered as a supporting occupation. For this reason, there were nearly no master teachers who would learn it. Despite this, Zhang Jiuxiao knew a surprisingly great deal about food.

"Well, I do love eating good food, so I spent my free time studying it. The Zhang Clan has employed a gourmet to take care of their meals, and back then, whenever I was free, I would tag along and learn from him, so... I guess I do have some understanding of it," Zhang Jiuxiao explained.

To most master teachers, gourmet was viewed as a trivial field of study. However, if one could complement the ingredients well, the tonic broth a gourmet broiled could possibly harness medicinal effects on par with pills.

In fact, the reason Zhang Jiuxiao was able to advance his cultivation and capabilities so far despite being only twenty-seven this year and a mere member of the side family could

be partly credited to his effective coordination of ingredients in his meals.

"Incredible," Zhang Xuan complimented.

Zhang Xuan did know a thing or two about gourmet as well, but that was mostly limited to appraising. He had not collected many books about that occupation, so he could not be said to be too proficient in it.

While the duo was talking to one another, Pavilion Master Yue suddenly laughed heartily in the center of the room. "How can delicacies go without fine wine?"

Flicking his wrist, he took out a gourd of wine.

"This is the Tianchen Brew specially brewed by Old Man Tianchen. I believe I need not explain how valuable it is to you. I happened to obtain a gourd of it a while back, and I stored it away for a whole three hundred years to allow it to mature beautifully. Since Zhao shi is here today, I think it would be a good time to take it out and savor it. Is there anyone here who wishes to give it a try?" Chuckling softly, Pavilion Master Yue uncorked the lid and gently poured out a cup.

The transparent wine in the cup emanated a strong fragrance that swiftly permeated the entire hall. Just a single whiff was sufficient to whet one's appetite for it.

"Fine wine!" Zhang Xuan nodded in approval.

The wine fragrance could be clearly smelled even from a distance away. From that, it could be seen that the purity and taste of the Tianchen Brew were bound to be far superior to the other wines he had drunk in the past.

Zhang Jiuxiao's eyes gleamed in agitation as his breathing hastened. "Old Man Tianchen is a famous Wine Sage in the Empire Alliance. The wine that he brews is able to intoxicate even Saint 7-dan experts! Tianchen Brew is known to be the finest wine he has ever made, and the quantity of it is severely limited, making it an extremely precious commodity. Countless people would willingly sell their fortunes just to acquire a single cup of it, only to leave in disappointment. And yet, Pavilion Master Yue is actually offering it to us?"

"Is this wine very famous?"

Seeing that Zhang Xuan did not understand the value of the wine before him, Zhang Jiuxiao exclaimed in agitation. "Of course it is! It's a priceless commodity! Even ten concentrated high-tier spirit stones wouldn't be able to buy you a single cup of it!"

"Ten concentrated high-tier spirit stones... just to buy a cup of wine?" Zhang Xuan's lips twitched.

Even the entire Qingyuan Empire Combat Master Hall only had ten of such concentrated high-tier spirit stones in its inventory, and to spend this sum of money just to buy a single cup of this wine...

How insane must one be to do something like that?

"It's true! Even though concentrated high-tier spirit stones are rare, there are still channels through which one can obtain them. However, the Tianchen Brew of Old Man Tianchen is not something that one can buy with just money. It takes a great deal of luck as well! Without sufficient luck, one might not even get to see it," Zhang Jiuxiao explained in agitation.

Seeing how excited Zhang Jiuxiao had become before the Tianchen Brew, Zhang Xuan could only smile helplessly.

To be honest, he really did not desire such fine wine. On the contrary, he even thought that drinking was a waste of time. Thus, unless he was really bored, he would never drink.

But judging from Zhang Jiuxiao's response, it seemed that if he could really purchase a cup of Tianchen Brew with ten concentrated high-tier spirit stones, he would fork out that sum without any hesitation. Seeing this, Zhang Xuan could not help but shake his head.

Was this wine so delicious as to make so many people willingly fork a huge fortune just for an opportunity to try it?

Seeing how Zhang Xuan had no interest in the Tianchen Brew at all, Zhang Jiuxiao sighed deeply and said, "I understand that Zhang shi might not think much of the Tianchen Brew because you are neither a drinker nor a gourmet. However, if you just look at their reactions, you should be able to roughly understand how valuable the Tianchen Brew is."

"Their reactions?"

Zhang Xuan raised his head, and only then did he notice the heated atmosphere in the hall. Everyone was staring at the cup of Tianchen Brew in Pavilion Master Yue's hand with reddened eyes, and it felt as if they would even rush forward to snatch it if not for the disparity in strength between them.

After a short moment of commotion, a young man spoke up. "Pavilion Master Yue, there are so many of us here but only a cup of fine wine. So, it wouldn't be too good to bestow it upon anyone here. Since that's the case, why don't we hold a competition, and the victor will be entitled to the cup of wine!"

"Yun shi is right. The fine wine brewed by Old Man Tianchen should only be awarded to those who are worthy of it. Otherwise, it would only be wasting it."

"Regardless of what competition it is, I shall be the one who drink that cup of wine!"

"Stop bragging. It's still not clear who will get the wine."

...

The words of the first young man swiftly received the approval of the crowd.

Considering how valuable the Tianchen Brew was, it was impossible for everyone to be given a cup of it. Since that was the case, the one who would be drinking the wine would have to display some kind of capability that others would have no choice but to submit to!

"Quiet down." Hearing the discussion among the crowd, Pavilion Master Yue took a sweeping gaze at the crowd and smiled. "All of your words are indeed true. There's only a cup of wine here, so naturally, it should only be awarded to the one who possesses the greatest capability. However, there's no need for a competition. I have already made up my mind on who here is the most deserving of this cup of wine. In my opinion, he's the strongest and most capable among all of you."

"Oh?"

"Strongest? Pavilion Master Yue, may we know whom the person you are referring to is?"

“To have Pavilion Master Yue offer such high praise for him, I sure am curious to see just who that person is!”

...

Pavilion Maser Yue’s words caused the crowd to immediately begin scanning the faces in the hall in hopes to finding whom the mysterious person complimented by him was.

They were all the top geniuses and experts in their own regions, so how could they possibly permit others to claim the title of the strongest without putting up a fight for it?

“This person’s reputation is not too striking, but throughout his journey here from an Unranked Kingdom, he has crashed two pavilions in total, and both of them were successful. Furthermore, he brought about a change in the dynasty of the Qingyuan Empire and had almost all the master teachers there acknowledge him as their teacher. It has not been long since his name emerged on the Master Teacher Continent, but his every deed is nothing short of impressive. I have nothing but respect for that person,” Pavilion Master Yue said.

“Two successful pavilion crashes?”

“Brought about a change in the dynasty of the Qingyuan Empire?”

“Journey here from an Unranked Kingdom?”

Everyone was taken aback for a moment before hurriedly turning their gazes toward Zhang Xuan and Zhang Jiuxiao.

These two were the last to arrive, so there was no doubt that they were the candidates from the Qingyuan Empire.

“Indeed. He’s no other than Zhang Xuan!” Pavilion Master Yue declared as he gestured at Zhang Xuan grandly.

This fellow sure has a bunch of boring tricks up his sleeves... Zhang Xuan clicked his tongue in disdain.

Pavilion Master Yue first took out the fine wine to evoke everyone’s agitation before announcing that he would gift the cup of wine to him.

On the surface, it might seem like a compliment, an attempt to raise his standing among the candidates. But in truth, Pavilion Master Yue was ‘helping’ him draw hostility from the rest of the candidates, compelling them to spurn him.

To make him the enemy of the crowd with just a cup of wine, that fellow sure had mastered politics.

“Zhang shi, you might be unaware of it, but Song Xuan is actually my wife’s younger brother. His recklessness back in the Qingyuan Empire nearly caused a huge disaster, and we really owe you one for correcting him. Also, your flawless resolution of the crisis has prevented a potential uprising in the Qingyuan Empire and instilled confidence back into the Master Teacher Pavilion. This is something that I could have never done. Thus, allow me to propose a toast to you with this cup of wine!”

With a chuckle, Pavilion Master Yue tapped on the table, and the wine on the table immediately floated into the air.

On the other hand, after hearing Pavilion Master Yue’s words, Zhang Xuan narrowed his eyes menacingly.

To first acknowledge his relationship with Song shi before expressing his respect toward Zhang Xuan... To onlookers, it seemed that there was nothing wrong with his words. However, that was basically invalidating any possible accusation that he was intentionally putting Zhang Xuan in a spot due to his conflict with Song shi.

To be able to make things difficult for Zhang Xuan while staying perfectly clean by the sidelines...

As expected of the head of the Qianchong Empire Master Teacher Pavilion, he sure knew how to play games.

Really, there was nothing more frightening than a despicable master teacher!

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